THE

BRAHMAVADIN

" एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति "

" That which exists is one : sages call it variously."

Rig-veda. I. 164-46.

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LINGA WORSHIP.

(*Continued from page 19.*)

9. The whole book on the Vratya is highly interesting. It describes the Vratya as wandering in the east, in the west, in the north, in the south, the forms of Vedic faith he carried to each of these places, and his life in these quarters of the world, aud how he produced the orders of Kshatriyas &c. The father of the European nations and the founder of many of the religious practices in the world is perhaps these Vratya or the barbarian Aryan nomads. The Swami declared that in India all are Aryans. He seems to have implied that the non-Brahmin Dravidians who were also the worshippers of Fire and Sun though not in the sacrificial form were the early Vratya settlers of this land, else it is not easy to account for the mutual assimilation of these and the Brahminical later settlers in all matters not only religious but also social and political. The story of the Vratyas as described in the Vedas shows that the Vedic religion was also aggressive even without

being personal in the sense in which the European orientalists understood personal religions. The formulation of Sukla Yajur Veda by Yajna Valkya is the out-come of the recognition of this fact.

10. With the expansion of the social area, with the widening of the intellectual horizon, Hinduism projected itself beyond its ethnic limits and became universal. The form of Vedic faith gradually changed without the loss of the spirit to suit the altered conditions of life. Mental Yajna was given a greater predominance. Elaborate rituals were simplified and the spirit of yajna was expressed in newer forms. It was enough for men who could command neither the wealth nor the convenience to perform an yajna, if they erected a YUPA or Linga, the ensigne of sacrifice, and worshipped it. Such a worship was considered as efficacious as a Vedic sacrifice. The Mantras used in the worship are also Vedic. Lily in his Buddhism says that the practice of erecting small Stambhas was in pre-Bhuddistic days, and references to it are to be found even in the Mahabharata. The Bhuddhists simply popularised this ancient custom even as they democratised the religion of the Vedantha. For, at the time of Goutama Karmakanda was gradually disappearing into temple worship which assumed a dominent form in the post-Bhuddistic times.

11. The Swami says, "The Bauddhas used to erect memorial stones consecrated to the memory of Buddha, and the very poor, who were unable to build big monuments used to express their devotion to him by dedicating miniature substitutes for them. Similar instances are still seen in the case of Hindu temples at Benares and other sacred places of India where those who cannot afford to build temples, dedicate very small temple like constructions instead. So, it may be that during the Buddha's

supremacy the rich Hindus, in imitation of the Bauddhas used to erect something like a memorial of their Skambha and the poor followed them, on similarly small reduced scale, afterwards the miniature memorial of the poor Hindus became a new addition to the Skambha."

12. Students of Indian History must never forget that Sakhyamuni is the child of Vedic faith, standing on the national background and an Indian Avatar interpreting the Mother-faith. He is an engineer who applied the Vedic waters of life to thirsting humanity. Buddhism is only a particular definition of the universal Hinduism, a single integration of national life. It is dynamic Vedanta. It is an attempt at the spiritual conquest of the whole world by India ; and out of a sheer necessity it converted India into a big hermitage. The domination and worship of the hermit God, Siva, in his double aspect of creation and destruction, of the Stupa or Linga, the creative Siva and the contemplative Dakshinamurti seated under a banian tree as the symbol of ascetic knowledge is a Buddhist legacy. Is not the eternal flux, perpetual creation and destruction the cardinal doctrine of the Buddhists ? When Buddhism disappeared into the mother faith a large body of ascetics passed into the fold of Hinduism ; and the five-headed Siva, representing the five fires of knowledge (of. Panchagni Vidya or Nachiketas Fire of Katha. Up.) and the Stupa or Linga, his ensign, became their God. Panchagnanin five-knowledged, is one of the names of Buddha himself ; Panchagnanin also means he who is versed in the five-knowledge of the Pasupata Saivas. In some places Buddha is represented with a halo of five rays over his head. Similarly a Siva-Linga has a canopy of a five-headed hood of a serpent.

13. The post-buddhistic period is one of great national reconstruction ; a creative epoch of art and industry.

Great spiritual ideas were expressed in wood, stone and plaster. The buddhists and Jains were great temple-builders. If one studies carefully the plans of these temples one will find that they are the modern forms of the ancient Yajnasala or the sacrificial house. You have the Yūpastambha or the Dhvajastambha, the Vedi or the Balipitha, the sacrificial hall adjoining it and the god inside as the Yajnapurusha. Dathgatha though he condemned animal sacrifices still was not against the spirit of the sacrificial religion. What he did was to perpetuate the old sacrificial worship in newer forms rid of the cruel element in it. He not only gave his strong support to the mental Yajna of the Aranyakas which constituted the religion of the higher classes, but also made his religion easily accessible to the lower orders of the temple worshipping masses. His followers saw in image worship only a humane form of the ancient sacrificial worship. To-day even non-buddhistic temple worship in India is treated as a regular sacrifice and conducted with the aid of sacrificial rituals. The Brahmotsavas celebrated for ten days at the beginning of every new year is simply a reproduction of the Vedic Dasaha sacrifice of the same duration. On the first day all the Vedic gods are invoked on the Dhvajastambha or the modern representative of the sacrificial Yupa, and on the tenth day night these are released and duly honoured and sent back to their abodes in heaven. That many of the Buddhistic forms and ceremonies may be traced to their Vedic originals needs no mentioning. When Buddhism was reclaimed into Hinduism newer races, newer forms and ceremonies also entered the body politic. When Hinduism was reconstructed on the downfall of Buddhism and fresh national synthesis was attempted, modern Hinduism was born. The Buddhistic Stupas, Chaityas, Dagobas gave birth to the Linga, Saligrama and

other kinds of symbols and image worships. When the art instinct of the race was stimulated much of the ancient sacrificial religion was retaken and re-expressed in more materialistic forms.

14. The Buddhists laid a great stress on the apotheosis of man into god and inaugurated the custom of saint worship and building Stupas, Chaityas, Dagobas in their honour. Such a custom is in vogue even among the modern Saivas of India. Some of the Siva temples are built over the ashes of great men. The famous Siva temple at Palani is said to have been built over the ashes of Agastya the father of Tamil language. One of the names of Buddha memorial stones is Dhatugarbha or the metal wombed. Dhatu also means Brahman or the essence of everything. Brahma is called in the Vedas Hiranyagarbha, golden wombed; this name is also given to Saligrama, for it is believed to contain gold within it. The Skambha is called the Golden-Reed, Golden-wombed, in the Atharvaveda. Also the Ukhya-Agni carried in a golden pan was similarly named. The raising of Sthupas over the ashes of great men is also a part of the sacrificial religion of the Vedas. A great man when he died becomes one with the essence of everything. This is also the teaching of Gautama. Hence the remains of great men are as holy as the sacrificial refuge glorified in the Atharva Veda as Agni, as Brahman. The building of Sthupas over the urn containing bones and ashes is a part Pitrimeda or the worship of Prajapati or Brahma, the first father of the human race, and is one of the five Yajnas of the brahminical Aryan. It is the worship of Agni as Death, as the All Destroyer to preserve the race culture and continuity of which he was the first progenitor. In short it is the worship of Agni as a social pact through time. This custom of the Baud-dhas, as the Swami has pointed out, accelerated the Linga

worship of Hinduism. (R. V. X. 18-14. Muir's Sanskrit Texts. V. 297-9)

15. We have pointed out that when Buddhism disappeared as modern Hinduism many of its practices also found their way into it with the necessary modifications. The worship of easily movable miniature Stambha or Linga as the embodiment of the supreme deity instead of huge ones built of solid stones in public places of worship came into existence. Gradually natural stones resembling a Linga was preferred to artificial ones such as the Narmada Linga, the Mekedhat Linga of Kaveri. These shaped by the attrition of water are considered very sacred. It must here be remembered that everywhere in the Vedas water is considered the home of Agni or Siva whose emblem the Lingam is. In some places in the R. V. in the Satarudriya of Y. V., also in the A. V. on the Skambha Siva is said to prefer natural objects for his home, such as trees, pebbles on river beds, mountain gorges, fords, whirlpools &c. "The mysterious being as a Golden Reed lies amidst the flood" (A. V. "Food and strength contained in stone and mountain" (S. Y. V. XVII. Here the stone is Agni. Stones of various bright colours are set up to represent Agni or Surya. (R. V. X. 139; S. Y. V. XVII. 59) Besides natural stones are purer and give greater sanctity and permanancy to them. Temporary Lingas are at times prepared out of clay and worshipped; after the worship is finished it is consigned to water which is the seat of Siva symbolised by the Linga. This practice is largely seen amongst the Linga worshippers living along the sacred river sides. The worship of clay models of deities for a period such as Linga, Ganesha, Airavata &c., and even of bricks is as old as the Brahmanas. In book XI of S. Y. V. a clay lump and a brick are made to symbolise Agni or Surya. Purishya Agni the god of manure, the

deity that overcomes obstacles or sets right defects in the performance of Yajna is preserved and worshipped as Agni or Suryan till the Yajna is finished, and then it is thrown into a river. This perhaps is the origin of the worship of clay Linga and throwing it into the water after its worship is finished. In all Yajnas, a piece of clay, potful of water and a wick light are all worshipped as emblems of Yajna. In the Agamas and Tantras the descendents of the ancient Brahmanas a similar worship is sometimes practised. When a temple is built and a deity established, a clay image of the deity is worshipped until the whole ceremony is over.

16. There is yet another custom among the Saivites that also requires some explanation. The Jungamas and Virasaiva followers of Basava always carry with them a Linga encased in metal and daily worship it. It is this that distinguishes the Lingayats from other Linga worshippers. It is as holy and essential to a Lingayat as the Sacred Thread to a twice-born. This is the Jungama Linga or moving Linga as distinguished from the Sthavara Linga or fixed ones as in temples. The custom of carrying sacred amulets tied to the arm or neck is as old as the Vedas. Siva lives in sacred amulets (Sathrudriya). In the A. V. we read of a small piece of Udumbara tree, or Bhilva tree which are the trees prescribed for the making of Yupastambha being carried as a charm encased in metals suspended on the neck. "May he who was our household fire, the ruler of our cattle, strong amulet of Udumbara endow us with prosperity." (A. V. XIX. 31). The Udumbara is identified with Agni. Udumbara or Fig-tree, out of which the Yupa is made, is the name of Yupastambha also. Besides in book XII of S. Y. V. in the formulas relating to Ukhya-Agni and the preparation of the Ahavaniya fire-altar the sacrificer always carries about his neck, fire in

a golden fire-pan sewed up in black antelope skin and worships the same. The texts recited are from the Rig-veda I. 96, 5. etc. The Ahavaniya fire is lighted from the fire in this firepan carried about his person by the sacrificer. This perhaps is the modern origin of the Jangama-Linga or the moving Linga on the person of the Lingayats. Just as every married Dvija has to maintain a permanent household fire for daily personal worship, every Linga worshipper has to carry a portable Linga or the emblem of sacrifice on his person for conducting his daily worship of Linga. While Sthira Linga in temples or public places of worship represents the village fire kept for purposes of public social or communal worship in the sacrificial house. Also Agni is the greatest purifier. This, carrying the emblem of Agni on the body of a person, is belived to keep a person always pure, free from sins, by reminding him that he is merely an instrument of the Linga which is the emblem of Siva on his breast.

17. It has been pointed out that the Linga worship is the worship of Brahman as symbolised by the Yupastambha, and that this worship was democratised by the Buddhists. It is therefore clear that there is no such thing as Phallic worship in India. There are no Phallic Manthras among the Lingas, no reference to it in any serious literature or tradition even among the lowest caste of Linga worshippers. Linga is worshipped as Shiva and and the mantra used in its worship even by the lowest classes is only the muttering of Panchakshari. Some of the Mantras of the higher classes of worshippers have already been given. That men like Bhagavan Shankara were Linga worshippers is proof positive that it was ennobling. Linga worship is unattended by any indecent ceremonies. And it would require a perverse imagination to trace indelicacy in it. Such is the view of the Orien-

talists also. In the Śiva Purana Shiva says, "I am omnipresent but specially present in twelve places and forms. They are Somnath, destroyed by Gazzani, Pattan, Mallicarjuna, Mahakalonkara, Amareswara, Vaidhya, Rameswara, Banares etc. In all these places Śiva is worshipped as Lingam. If Lingam was phallic then the worship of Prithwi Linga, Appu-Linga, Thejo Linga, Vayu Linga and Akasa-Linga would have no meaning. The Akasa Lingam of Chitambaram is no image but an Ambaram or empty space—an empty room curtained. The Vayu-Linga of Kalahasti is the perpetual playof air on a number of lights kept burning for how many centuries we do not know. The passage of air behind the lamps is so arranged that in group of lights when the central one flickers rapidly all the rest burn steadily; but when the central one burns steadily all the rest flicker. The Thejo Linga of Tiruvannamalai is a light on a height in the ghats. The revolving Linga of Dholphur is called Ghatiswara or Time, the all destroyer. The above examples would be enough, to prove, that Lingam is simply Siva emblemed as the Yupastambha.

18. If Linga worship is not phallic then what about the base of the Linga called Yoni or Bhaga identified by the orientalist with the female phallus? Yoni is a technical term. The base or resting place of anything is called a Yoni. and does not mean the female phallus. In the Taitt. Up, brain is the seat of Indra and medulla the base of the skull is called Indrayoni. When the cosmic worship of the Karmakanda gave place to the psychic worship of the Jnanakanda and the signs of Yoga was developed, brain was called the seat of Sadasivalingam or the ever blissful Lingam. In architecture the basic stone of a pillar is its Yoni. Authorities can be quoted from the Vedas that the base is always feminine. Lord Krishna says in the Gita

the Universe (Brahman) is my Yoni. Earth is feminine and Heaven masculine in the cosmic Riks of the Rig Veda. The square hole dug beneath the Arani woods while kindling fire, the lower Arani stick, the Yupavedi or altar on which the Stambha stands, the square hole in which the Stambha is fixed, the piece of wood put into that hole to secure the stability of the Yupa, the hearth on which the fire is kindled, the Pranalika or the water passage in the basic platform to draw out the water poured on the image which is also square, are all feminine. (R. V. I. 35, 99, 256 S. Y.V. on the construction of the hearth, Vedi and Yupa; the Vedic sutras of Apastamba, Kousika, &c.)

(*To be continued.*)

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF AN INCARNATION OF GOD

or

How to distinguish an Incarnation of God.

BY SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA.

What is the necessity of Divine incarnation ? God is infinite, He is absolutely one and unlimited. Then why should He incarnate at all ? When He is limitless, how can He confine Himself in a form which is limited ?

This human body is a peculiar thing. It seems to be only three and a half cubits in length, whereas in reality it is unlimited. For what is a living body ? It is a conscious entity. Without this consciousness, the body would be as dull, as dead and unconscious as is any dead object. So consciousness alone gives value to it. Otherwise it is absolutely worthless. A living body therefore means not only the body, but consciousness as well. Now this consciousness which shines through the five organs of sense, through the five organs of action and through yourself is inside the body, not outside. If you stick a knife into your body you feel pain, but if you put it somewhere else, is there any sensation of pain ? This shows that the seat of consciousness is inside the body.

Every one imagines that when he is sleeping, he is unconscious, but this is not a fact. When a man is awake he is conscious, in dream he is also conscious, so in the wakeful as well as in the dream condition he is conscious. When he sleeps soundly however he thinks that he is unconscious ; but this is not so. If you can remember a thing, you must have been conscious of it when you

experienced it. Memory always means recalling a past experience. If then when you wake up, you remember that you have been in sound sleep that proves that you were conscious. That you are able to recall the experience of sleep shows that there was consciousness at that time. When a man experiences the absence of all sensation, perceptions etc, that is what we call sleep. But consciousness is still there. Nor is the man outside his body. In the three conditions of sleep, dream, and waking, the man is always inside his body; and in all three, consciousness is there intact. From birth to death it is always present in a living man. But the mind is not there and the senses are not there in deep sleep. If a man takes your book away at that time, you do not know it. Only when you wake up do you see that it is gone and which shows that your powers of perception were absent.

Throughout the whole lifetime of a man therefore consciousness is present. Mind does not always exist senses do not always exist, body does not always exist, but consciousness always exists. It is consciousness which enlivens the senses and the mind. It is consciousness which enables the senses to perceive and sense all things. Now this consciousness which is distinct and separate from the senses and the mind, has the power not to be confined by the mind, or the senses or the body. When it is not confined by these, it is in its liberated condition—unconfined. This consciousness is therefore really limitless; and we can make this out in sound sleep, for at that time it has separated itself from body and mind and so is unconfined, infinite; it must exist inside the body. It can never be outside, for the moment it goes outside, the man drops down dead. Now consciousness being infinite and unlimited, and being also an essential part of man, then man must be finite and infinite at the same time. He is

finite as regards his body, he is finite as regards his mind and he is finite as regards his ego ; but he is infinite as regards his consciousness. It is therefore possible for him to be finite and infinite at the same time. How much more must it be possible for God !

There is this difference, however, between man and God. Man has forgotten his infinite nature. He thinks he must have a certain amount of food, of air, of heat, to make him live. In his mind he is less limited, but still compared with infinite knowledge the amount he can possess is infinitesimally small. Still we must admit that he who lives in his mind has expanded himself infinitely more than he who lives solely in his body. But what is the number of the second class ? At least 99 percent of humanity. The great majority of men believe that they are weak or strong, hungry or well fed, ill or well. For suppose, however, there is a poet or a philosopher. What does he do ? He shuts himself up in a room and becomes so lost in his thought that he forgets his body. Such a man is honoured and respected by all men, because they know that he is much wiser than they ; and it is to the feet of such that we go to sit and learn. Yet again compared to infinite knowledge, what this man knows is infinitesimally small ; and the knowledge of the average man is still less. Nearly every man imagines that he is three and a half cubits long and that at the death of his body he must die. And because he wants to live, he hates death. This is not the case, however with one who lives more in his consciousness ; and such a one is known as an incarnation of God.

Man identifies himself more with his body and mind. He belives himself to be finite and his consciousness limited. That is the reason why Arjuna said to Sri Krishna : " You are of my age and yet you say that you knew that which

happened before I was born." and Sri Krishna replied: "Many lives have elapsed of yourself and myself, Arjuna. You know them not, but I know them all."

"Because you confine your consciousness by your body and by your mind, you know few things, and you do not know about the whole of the past. You only know what has taken place in this lifetime. Because you have identified yourself with this body and mind. Therefore your extension is limited and your life is limited. But I have identified myself with my consciousness, therefore my extension is unlimited and my life is unlimited and I can know all time." This must have been Sri Krishna's explanation of the affirmation which He made to Arjuna.

The Incarnation of God has the power to separate Himself from body and mind consciously, and He does it from His birth. Suppose you consciously separate yourself from your shirt that is one thing. But during sleep someone takes it from your body, you do not know it. So in the same way when you are asleep, someone separates you from your body and mind. That power, which has forced you to lose your consciousness, has mastery over you and that power is sleep. Sleep, however, never overpowers an incarnation of God. He is always wide awake. Therefore He has mastery over His body when he is wide awake; He has mastery over His mind when He is dreaming, and He has mastery over his consciousness in sound sleep. Hence He is always the master. He is the master of the wakeful condition, of the dream condition and of sound sleep. He sleeps only when He wills. We often try to stay awake, but we fall asleep. With an incarnation of God, however, that is not the case. For that reason He is called Hrishikesha or Lord of the senses.

As in you infinite consciousness is enlightening your body and your mind, so in the tiniest animal-cule, that

same consciousness is enlightening its body and mind. Just as there may be a very small creek filled from the big ocean, so behind all these finite consciousnesses there is the infinite ocean of consciousness. From the highest being, Brahma, to the lowest blade of grass, all living organisms are a peculiar mixture of that which is finite and that which is infiinite. In the same way when God incarnates, He too, becomes finite and infinite. But he only appears finite. He never indentifies Himself with the finite. Man thinks himself finite so his body is finite, his mind is finite, and his consciousness is finite. But because God never identifies Himself with His body and mind, although He appears finite, He is really infinite; although He appears limited in powers, He is really omnipotent. Therefore Sri Krishna says to arjuna: "Because men cannot recognize my infinitenature, they treat me like an ordinary man; but I am always infinite, although I may appear finite." When Sri Krishna said: "I am all this", arjuna asked Him to show His univer-al form and then He manifested His Divine side.

This then is the difference between an Incarnation of God and the ordinary created beings of the universe. Man is always consciously finite and unconsciously infinite, while an Incarnation of God is consciously infinite and finite.

There are also other marks which distinguish an Incarnation of God from a *Mukta-Purusha.*

By sitting at the feet of a true teacher, by serving him, by worshipping him, the disciple realises his perfect nature. Such are called *Sādhana-Siddhas.*

Then there are those who become perfect by a dream. In a dream a man sees some great Soul who gives him a *Mantram.* When he wakes up here members that

Mantram and repeating it, he becomes perfect. These are called *Swapna-Siddhas*.

There are certain *Nitya-Siddhas* who incarnate with God. Because they are, as it were, courtiers of God, companions of God and are constantly with God ; they must be perfect ; and when God comes, they come with Him— There is a creeper on which the fruit comes first, then the flower. *Nitya-Siddhas* are like that. They are born with wisdom and that helps them to distinguish right from wrong, good from evil, profit from loss. Then being able through this wisdom to know what is right, what is good, what is real profit, they begin to struggle for these and this struggle is the flower.

You can easily make out *Nitya-Siddhas* and differentiate them from an Incarnation of God, because They always sit at the feet of an Incarnation and never claim to be equal to their master.

An Incarnation of God is always perfect. Baby Sri Krishna showed the whole universe in his mouth to His mother. Apparently He was a helpless and weak baby, but He killed the most powerful demons even in His babyhood.

He was a peculiar mixture of weakness and strength, of that which is absolutely finite with that which is absolutely infinite.

There is another thing which distinguishes an Incarnation of God. An ordinary man, if he wants to learn, must go and sit at the feet of some one, but an Incarnation never needs a teacher. He never has a Guru. He gets all His illumination from within himself. Illumination comes to man by the co-operation of his mind, body and the external world. He analyzes the world with the help of his body and mind, weighs it in the balance of reasoning and finds it wanting. Thus giving up the world on account

of its hollowness he realises truth within himself. But the Incarnation of God never cares to analyze the world in this way. He never worships as others do. He comes to teach a new religion, to teach men how to worship; so how can He comply with the manners of those around Him? How can he move like them, live like them worship like them? For that reason people criticise and misunderstand Him at first. He comes as a teacher and not as one who is taught by the ordinary methods of the world. Take our great Master, Sri Ramakrishna. Most men must read books, most men must go to school; but without reading books, without going to school, He was able to know everything; while those who read books and who go to school really know nothing. So He came to teach that if a man wants to realize his infinite all-knowing nature, he must not make much of books, but must go within and read the book of his own inner self. Then only will he realize his perfect nature.

If, however, you should not send your boy to school if you should not have him read books people would think you mad because we are ordinary mortals; whereas an Incarnation is absolutely independent. He looks to no one for help. For this reason people at first think Him insane; but when they realise His greatness then they come and sit at His feet. Every Incarnation has His friends and His enemies, but His friends far supersede His enemies.

After what you have heard just now, it will be easy for you to distinguish an Incarnation of God from those who are not. All men may be classified under four heads: first, ordinary men of the world; second, Siddhas, who are not born perfect but struggle and realise their perfect nature afterwards, and who are distinguished from an Incarnation by this struggle. Then come the Nitya Siddhas

who always accompany the Incranation, just as fragrance always accompany the flower, or as rays accompany the Sun. An Incarnation is always independent. He never struggles to realise the Truth. Illumination comes to Him from within without any effort. Sometimes He seems to struggle for realisation, but that is intended to teach men how to follow the path leading to perfection. He comes down here to guide His erring children, and hence should have to behave in such a way as to set a good example to them.

THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

LIFE & TEACHINGS OF "SRI RĀMĀNUJĀCHĀRYA"

Continued from page 28.

The great merit of his works is his noble and successful attempt at the reconciliation of the various apparently-contradictory Texts of the Vedas and Upanishads, relied upon by the various Schools of Thought as of supreme importance, and giving each of them equal authority in their philosophic interpretation. While the Adwaitic as well as the Dwaitic Theologian finds it necessary, with a view to maintain his special doctrine or school or thought, to treat certain Scriptural Texts as of PRIMARY (प्रधान Pradhâna) importance, and certain others as OF SECONDARY गौण Gauna) CONSIDERATION, the Visistadwaitic Teacher Ramanuja regards no such artificial distinctions necessary in a Divine Work like the Vedas or Upanishads (अपौरुषेय); and interprets each set of them as of equal authority and of necessary importance, and reconciles both the interpretations as being in conformity with the traditional and hoary teachings of the Ancient Rishis and Aryan Teachers, for his wording on this point is (पूर्वाचार्यसुरक्षितां Purvâchârya Surakshitâm = The interpretation that has been carefully guarded or maintained and handed down to posterity by Ancient Teachers.) This fits in very well with his doctrine and teachings, as is occasionally pointed out by Dr, Thibaut in the course of his Translations of the Commentaries on the Vedanta Sutras. (Vide Sacred Books of the East—Vols. XXXIV Introduction; and XXXVIII).

9. The Visistâdwaita School of thought has been a recognised Vedantic doctrine held by Aryan Rishis and Teachers from time immemorial, as is evident from Ramanuja's reference to a number of Āchâryâs or preceptors who maintained this doctrine from Bodhayana downwards, and what Ramanuja did was only to give this system of thought an impetus to its spread by his lucid exposition of its salient points in a popular and easily understandable way. Its chief doctrines may be briefly summarised in the following terms :—

(1) The Eternal Essence, styled the Parabrahman, is the One Truth or Verity—Infinite, Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient. To this Substance or Reality are attached, in an inseparable union, the two other verities—CHIT (individual soul), and ACHIT (Prakriti). These three Verities co-exist in all conditions—either in the स्थूल *Sthūla*, or manifested form, or in the सूक्ष्म *Sūkshma*, or unmanifested form. They are generally expressed by the compound word चिदचिदीश्वर CHIDACHIDĪSHVARA (CHIT + ACHIT + ISVARA = Spirit, Matter (Non-spirit) and Lord); and the relationship that subsists between the Lord and the other two verities is similar to that subsisting between substance and attributes, the sun and the ray of light; Metal and its lustre &c).

(2). The Lord (Paramatman) is endowed with all essential auspicious (कल्याणगुण) attributes, and is free from inauspicious (हेयगुण) ones.

(3) THE ARCHITECT AND ENGINEER, who wields this huge and complicated Universe, is a Being, sufficient unto Himself, and capable of its Creation, Preservation and Transformation. He is the SAVIOUR of its innates. He is styled "Nârâyaṇa."

(4) That the highest duty of man as a son of God, is to fear the Lord, the Great Father, and walk righteously, with an unceasing desire to reach the highest stage of existence, from which there will be no reversion to the physical or material planes. This last point establishes the grand principle of Visistâdvaitic Faith, viz. The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man.

As this system of Thought recognises "Vishnu" or "Nârâyaṇa" as the Supreme Essence, this is known as "Vaishnava Visistadwaitism."

There is another system, known sometimes as the "Saiva Visistadwaita," promulgated by "Nilakanta Sivacharya, a later Theologian than Ramanuja, in which the name of "Siva" is substituted in place of Vishnu as the Supreme Lord. In other respects the treatment of the subject appears to be the same.

10. Now, let me briefly recount a few incidents in the Life of Ramanuja within the short space of time available for us, and see how far we can follow in his footsteps so as to deserve his discipleship.

11. Our sage Ramanujacharyar the propounder of qualified Monism, was born in 1017 A.D. nearly nine hundred years ago in Sriperumbudur, 10 miles from Trivellore. His father was Kesava Asuri, a respectable Brahman, who had performed several Yâgâs, and his mother was known as Kantimati. His career was full of vicissitudes In his time the Vaishnava faith was at a low ebb; and except in certain Vaishnava centres—such as Srirangam and Kanchi, it was not much in evidence. It is this circumstance probably that gave rise to an erroneous impression, even to the Tamil scholar of high attainments I mean Dr. Caldwell, who wrote that Ramanujacharya propounded a *new* doctrine styled "Visistadvaita philosophy". Monier Williams, who

had a personal knowledge of India, also deplore in his "Indian Wisdom" that he could not come in contact with Indian scholars who could well explain to him the noble tenets of this system of Philosophy. Even to this day the tenets of the Visistadvaita School of Thought are not so well known as the Advaita system of philosophy. The apathy and indifference of such of our Vaishnavafollowers as would command leisure and convenience to enlighten the public, is mainly responsible for this state of things. What is wanted is an organised effort to give publicity to the embedded truths of this system of philosophy, chiefly written in Tamil not to speak of the Voluminous writings found in Sanskrit written by the predecessors as well as by the successors of Sri Ramanuja. Those works which are written in Tamil are styled Prabandha Literature,* which is, in the words of the late lamented Dewan Bahadur V. Krishnamacharyar of Madras "a perfect treasure-trove of pious and philosophic thoughts, and of household hints on moral conduct and purity of life." The same learned scholar adds:—'A faithful presentation of the contents of such sacred Literature in English is therefore an effort of no

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*In this direction, an attempt is being made since 1898, under my editorship, to publish the "Nityânusadhâna series in three Languages—Tamil, Telugu and Kannada, in separate Parts, for the benefit of all Sri Vaishnavas of Southern India and Burmah. The first Six Parts (Tiruppallandu, Tiruppalli Yeluchchi, Tiruppâvai, Amalanādipirān, Kaṇṇinun Siruttambu, and Tirumalai are now available, either, as one bound volume (linen), or as separate Parts. The Anglo-Vernacular editions contain not only the word-for-word meaning and paraphrase for each stanza in each language, but also a biography of the author, a Critical review of the work, and a Translation of each stanza in English for the use of all those gentlemen who are conversent with the latter language; whereas pure Vernacular editors issued separately, also contain similar facilities as well as explanatory footnotes in place of the English Translation for the benefit of all Sri Vaishnavas (ladies especially), who may be ignorant of English.

ordinary interest to all who are concerned in the diffusion of such Literature all over Upper India as well as in Europe and America, where the Adwaitic utterances of Swami Vivekananda are the only things known. Our countrymen in the North admittedly understand little or nothing of the Visistadvaita philosophy, and the scientific thoughts of South Indian authors (like Ramanuja and Vedanta Desikar), their logical conception of Religion and plan of Salvation, and our youths in the Tamil, Telugu and Kannada lands know even less than foreigners, and therefore need a stimulus to study the Hymns and Lyrics in praise of God, and the morality taught by religious leaders in the Tamil region."

12. *His personality and example* :—

That he was born a genius, and a person of extraordinary ability, is evident from the fact that, before he was five-and-twenty, he was able to make an impression upon all with whom he came in contact, that he was cut out for a noble mission. When he went from Kanchi, (Conjeevaram) one great seat of learning, to Srirangam, another great centre of Vaishnavaism, to confer with the great sage, Yamunacharya, who was on his death-bed, and who waited for him sufficiently long, it was found too late; for on the day on which he reached the northern banks of the Cauvery overlooking Srirangam, he saw the rising streams of smoke emanating from the funeral pyre of the great Teacher with a large concourse of Vaishnava Brahmins and others around the spot. This upset all his plans, and he was greatly disappointed at this unfortunate crisis. He returned to Kanchi, and he repaired to Srirangam under the orders of the Almighty, which he duly ascertained from a consultation with the intimate devotees of God, (for in those golden days the temple servants were holy men of devotion and

piety, bent upon contemplation and spiritual advancement; and they did not resort to such holy places merely for the sake of paltry lucre, as is the case in the present degenerate days).

13. To give you only one instance of his universal Love for mankind, the story of his initiation into the import of the sacred eight-syllabled Mantram called the "*Astâkshara*" by one of his teachers may be mentioned:—

His five Teachers were:—

Sanskrit name.	Tamil name.	Remarks.
1. Srisaila Purna ...	Tirumali Nambi ...	Initiator into the esoteric Mysteries of the Ramayana.
2. Mahâ Purna ...	Periya Nambi ...	First Teacher and Guide.
3. Gosthi Purna ...	Tirukkottiyur Nambi ...	Initiator into the eight, syllabled Holy Mantra styled Astâkshara.
4. Kanchi Purna ...	Tirukkatchi Nambi ...	His Teacher and Friend.
5. Mâlâdhara ...	Tirumâlaiyândân ...	Initiator into the Mysteries of Tiruvoymoli (Prabandha Literature).

He went to Tirukkottiyur (near Pudukota) from Srirangam not less than eighteen times to receive the due initiation into the Mysteries of the Holy Mantra; each time he went there, he got disappointed, for the sage Gôsthipurna would not part with it for any thing in the world. Under various pretexts he delayed the INITIATION, testing the recipient's patience, forbearance, and temper in many ways. On all occasions of disappointment, Ramanuja used to blame himself and his Karmic bonds; and never reflected upon the unseemly conduct of his Guru, for such a procedure would be regarded as blasphemy. At last, at the intercession of the Almighty Himself, he is said to have divulged the special import of the MANTRA to Ramanuja under a special solemn promise of not revealing it to any body else, under pain of suffering eternal torments in the Hellish Regions for any undeserved divulgation of the Mysteries. Only the very next day after this Initia-

tion, he made up his mind to proclaim such a holy mantra to mankind in general, from the top of a gopuram hard by, on the plea that, though he may become guilty of a serious sin by such a revelation he was sure of securing salvation for a number of deserving and persistent souls, and that his personal sacrifice in the interests of humanity was a worthy act. Such was his love of mankind, irrespective of caste, creed, or colour. Hence the story that he encouraged the persecution of Jains and others of different persuation should be regarded as a "Myth." On the other hand, many joined his faith out of conviction. For want of time now, I cannot dwell upon the other incidents of his life, which are already briefly indicated.

14. In all popular religions, which have largely influenced mankind, there will generally be found two aspects (1) The *Intellectual*, which is the most philosophic, suitable to the highly-cultured development of the educated classes, and (2) The EMOTIONAL, which strongly appeals to the feelings and emotions of the masses. This latter aspect is prominently brought out in his temple-reform, while in his philosophical writings such as the Commentaries on the so-called प्रस्थानत्रय Prasthānatraya (Upanishads, Vedanta-sutras, and Gita), his polemical excellence and superiority of argumentation are patent even to the casual reader. He accordingly revived the ancient Vaishnava doctrine, in accordance with the Pâncharâthra Agama worship, the popular side of which represents the Almighty as occupying a Divine seat in Paradise with his Consort, surrounded by myriads of celestials, as immortal as Himself, who minister to Him in all manner of ways, and whose sole duty consists in chanting halleluiahs in praise of the Supreme Being, and in the perfect enjoyment of eternal bliss. This view is in conformity with that which has been held by the Venerable Ālvârs or

Vaishnava Saints who preceded him, as well as by the Holy Acharyas who followed him. The special belief which swayed these inspired Beings in this connection was that on this mundane universe, the same prototype of the paraphernalia and glory as characterised the illimitable and indescribable Celestial Regions which are no doubt beyond the comprehension of poor worldlings like us, of limited sense is to be seen in a miniature scale, in these holy spots, such as Srirangam and Tirupati; and in that view the construction of temples (Vaishnava) has been effected. Similarly the Saiva Temples of Chidambaram, Madura, have been built in accordance with the Agamas of the Saiva cult. For all along, from the early prehistoric times, two streams of religious thought— the Vaishnava and the Saiva, have been flowing parallel to each other in the Indian soil prior to the advent of Buddhism, and have swayed their respective votaries who happened to be powerful sovereigns, and who, as such, commanded much influence; and with the support and patronage of such potentates, the religious aspect of each stream of thought progressed, putting down its brother stream or streams for the time being; but the Indian Sovereigns, when left to themselves, were more inclined to tolerate the existence, continuance in their dominions, of different systems of religion as suited the tastes and feelings their subjects, though they would naturally show a slight leaning towards their own faith by special favours or grants to such Institutions. But special persecutions, like the one to which our sage Ramanujacharyar was subject, was the exception rather than the rule. Toleration in religion and domestic concerns appears to have been a well-recognised cardinal Principle of Hindu Faith, in accordance with the celebrated Teaching of Lord Sri Krishna in the Celestial Song, Bhagavadgita :—

यें यथामांप्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।
ममवर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थसर्वशः ।
यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्धयार्चितुमिच्छति ।
ततस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेवविदधाम्यहम् ॥

"In whatever manner men worship Me, in the self-same manner do I accept them; whatever (righteous path) men follow, O Arjuna, that path leads them to Me in every way.

Whosoever wishes to worship, with entire devotion, whatsoever Form (of God), in that Form of God I render his devotion steady."

It is this SPIRIT, it will be seen, that pervades the mind of the Indian community, and it is this SPIRIT of tion and Universality of Faith that accounts for the existence of so many varieties, or shades of belief, in Religion, or in different systems of Thought.

(To be continued.)

THE PLANE OF LIGHT OF THE BRAHMA-VID-VARISṬHA.

The phenomenon of Samyak-darśanam which is recognised by Vedāntins as the highest achievement of the bond-freed spirit has been sedulously sought and realised by such God-taught souls as Śrī-Rāmakrishṇa-Paramahamsa. But there are others at the present day who have been blessed only with a glimpse of the Light, or in whom there has only been a feeble flash of the Beyond, who, in the first flush of that strange jumble of thought-perception and sense-perception, accompanying the momentary lifting of the heart, mistake the shadows for the substance, nay, endeavour to prove that they have attained to the very Bourne, dazzled by the shimmering sheen of those shadows. Such visionaries are not in any degree possessed of that rare "degree of sanctification" which Hindu Mystics have always eulogised as Śabdārthajñāna, a condition of superb truth-piercing trance which dawns only on ripe and endowed *illuminati*, but hardly, if ever, on halting or haphazard intruders on "real" Realms. "Clairvoyance" is a dubious term meaning nothing more than 'transparent vision,' and such 'vision,' making short work of space, time and, finally, of all notions of 'succession,' including the so-called phantasm of "causation" which is only a sort of succession in disguise, comprises, under another classification, vision on the Conscious, Sub-Conscious, and Super-Conscious planes, of which the last leads to the luring 'Cosmic Consciousness' which is "Diving into the Deity" or "Going to God." This is the true *Turiyātītam*, the *Adhvanaḥ-pāram* of the Kaṭha-Upanishat, that tantalises the devotee amid worldy wails, and draws him towards

the "Doom of Day," known to the sanctified spirits of the Romish Church as the "Beatific Vision."

The states summed up by the curious combination, "Clairvoyance," are so elusive of grasp and slippery that a hotch-potch is the inevitable result, if we do not pause to ponder on the variety of its versi-coloured revelations. It does not fully follow, from the sole reason of a person being a clairvoyant on the physical plane, that he must needs be also a "seer" on the Bosom of the Boundless Blue. But the ecstatic clairvoyant in his luciform sheath, who can soar into the sweeping stretches of the Superliminal, has the *Will of the Widest Vision* in the hollow of his hand. Yet, even to him, "seeing" is only "sense-perception" at best, whatever the sweet subtlety of its objective, and, hence, he does not deign to such scattering of his forces, and "dunning of the dust." Real clairvoyants rarely care to communicate their connings to the public press, and even if sometimes they would, they could not. And some of the "booming" pseudo-clairvoyants of self-deceived dogmatism are quite keen on the so-called analysis of sense-experiences or sensations into thought-perceptions or cerebrations. But if they would be true to their salt, they should not stop short at a search for *samskāras* or *vāsanas* or the inherited tendencies of the subtler mind-stuff, but should drive their drill deeper down. A vaunted knowledge of the mysterious modes of mastering the powerful "plexuses," or of meandering around the *maṇḍalas*, never even takes us to the back-door of the "heaven of heavens", of the true "Abode of God." The Seeker after God should proceed further in his quest, and boil down "thoughts" into their meta-psychical rudiments, and these "rudiments" again into their very "first principles," until they "vanish into thin air" in the infinite azure of "Absolute Be-ing." The truth is that whatever is analysis and

reduction from below upwards, is synthesis and complication from above downwards. Unless the would-be "Anointed" be prepared to tear "thought" to tatters, to visualise, if he can, the "Motor of Māyā," it is idle of him to pose as a Seeker of God, inflicting the world with his lisping gabble of shady significance, which has abundantly been to the fore as much as the existence of babes, ever since the dawn of time.

But, for those, who, sleeping or waking, rest in the face-to-face certitude of the true Super-luminal, physical hunger and thirst are absent, for, even their fleshy frame is full of that supple essence which is the sweet sap sustaining the whole universe. What is observed above is applicable, by parity of reasoning, to "Clairaudience" or any other psychical sense. For, as mystics know, a stage is reached in their ecstasy, where all senses seem to boil and blend, when "seeing" is "hearing", and every other sensation. That is the true "Translation" of trance. The subtle secret of the awakening of these "higher experiences" is to be sought for in one's own body. As Svāmi Vivekānanda so frankly says in a different connexion, "If the steam is turned, on the engine must run". The apt allusion to the 'steam' and the 'engine' has more than a surface semblance. The trouble is, we have to store the 'steam', and not only to store it, but also to know how and where to turn it. And purity of thought is the fuel which will gently generate the steam, but never that purity, divorced from compassion, which will not scruple to spill the life-blood of one's neighbour, in the name of parading piety; on the other hand, the purity that *is capable of bearing fruit,* is what pervades the "poverty-stricken" soul, as it feels the fullest favour of its "Father in Heaven", alike in the stings of scorpions, and the pleasures of the passing, phenomenal panorama. Thus tempered

in the fires of the "Valley of the Shadow of Death," the pining acolyte perchance probes into the depths of the "Great Be-ing," and, one day, the flood-gates of the Divine Light suddenly lift, and, in a blaze of dazzling splendour, he sees his *real form*, and, aye, in it, the very back-ground of all "forms." Such a blessed soul gazes on the fulness of *his own reality*, flaming in ineffable lustre, where, just but a moment ago, he descried, as he now finds, only an empty, though a seemingly significant, *fata morgana* of sighs and ṭears, a hideous dance of dire shadows.

Such a sight, even if it should vanish, in the twinkling of an eye, is more confirmatory of the substantiality of our existence, than anything that the weary world can show. Out of the phantasmal past peer, to be sure, St. John of the Cross and Tirumūlar, Buddha and Saṅkara, Śāntideva and Nagārjuna, Chaitanya and Kabir, but what of that? Has not the living present its own "Legion of Honour"? Rāmakṛishṇa-Paramahamsa and Emerson, Sadāśiva-brahmam and Tillaināthan-Svāmi, are ever with us to comfort and cheer along the "Razor-Path."

V. V. RAMAṆAN.

BHAGAVAD GITA—AN ESSAY.

(Continued from page 41.)

VI

The Lord then proceeded to point out the difficulty of pursuing this wisdom-course. Says Sri Krishna :

यततोह्यपिकौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः ।
इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभंमनः ॥

"O son of Kunti, the excited senses of even a wise man, though he be striving, impetuously carry away his mind." Such is the power of the senses and to one who dotes on them the results are, as our Lord recounts, the following :—

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।
सङ्गात्सञ्जायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥
क्रोधात्भवति सम्मोहः सम्मोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद्बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशा त्प्रणस्यति ॥

"Man, musing on the objects of senses, conceiveth an attachment to them : from attachment ariseth desire ; from desire anger cometh forth : from anger proceedeth delusion ; from delusion confused memory ; from confused memory the destruction of reason ; from destruction of reason, he perisheth." It is, thus, clear that the thought of sense-objects is the source of evil. How is this evil to be avoided ? The natural activity of the senses being charactersied by love and hatred, he who is devoid of them will have brought his senses under control and attained peace. Hence says the Lord :

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥

"He attains peace, who, self-controlled, approaches objects with senses devoid of love and hatred and brought under his control."

What is the advantage of one's attaining peace? Listen:

प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।

" In peace, there is an end of all his miseries." He, who has subjugated the senses and attained peace, is said to have the following attainments:

यानिशासर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्तिसंयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सानिशापश्यतोमुनेः ॥

"When it is night to all creatures, the samyami (sense-victor) is awake; when all creatures are awake, that is night to the seeing Muni."

The purport is the sensuous understanding does not shine, like night, to the âtma-seeing muni nor does the âtma-wisdom to the other creatures. The sensuous understanding and the âtma wisdom form the "night", *i. e.* do not shine, to the Muni and the other creatures respectively.

As a direct answer to the question of Arjuna *re* the characteristic marks of a Karma Yôgî, the following may be made mention of, viz, satisfaction in the self; equanimity in pleasure and pain; absence of attachment; complete withdrawal of senses from objects and devotion to the Lord.

The second chapter ends, as it begins, with the extolling of Sânkhya-Yoga. Since the Lord spoke in this

chapter of both the Yogas and extolled both of them, a doubt as to which of these two is better naturally arose in the mind of Arjuna. Hence the third chapter opens with Arjuna's query as to which of these two—Sankhya or Karma Yoga—will take him to bliss. Our Lord's answer thereto covers up the third chapter.

M. S. RAMASWAMI AIYAR, B.A. L.T.,

To be continued.

The forty-eighth Birth-day Anniversary of Sri Swami Vivekananda will be celebrated at the Ramakrishna Home. Brodies' Road, Mylapore, Madras, on Sunday the 6th February 1910.

The presence and co-operation of all are respectfully solicited.

PROGRAMME.

1. Bhajana ... ... 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.
2. Feeding the poor ... ... 10-30 „ to 2 p.m.
3. Lecture on "The Swami and his Mission" 5-30 p.m.

by M. R. Ry. C. V. Kumaraswami Sastriyar Avl., B.A. B.L., Judge, City Civil Court Madras.

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NOTES OF SOME WANDERINGS WITH THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(Continued from page 10.)

Persons :—The Swami Vivekananda ; gurubhais, and disciples.

A party of Europeans, amongst whom were Sthir Mata, the 'Steady Mother' ; 'One whose name was Joy' ; and Nivedita.

Place.—Kashmir.

Time.—June 20th to October 12th 1886.

Our boats were moored near the edge of the wood, and we could see that the presence of the silent chapel, of the Buddha, which we had just explored, moved the Swâmi deeply. That evening we all foregathered in *Sthir Mata's* house boat, and a little of the conversation has been noted down.

Our Master had been talking of Christian ritual as derived from Buddhist, but one of the party would have none of the theory.

" Where did Buddhist ritual itself come from ?" She asked.

" From Vedic," answered the Swâmi briefly.

"Or as it was present also in southern Europe, is it not better to suppose a common origin for it, and the Christian, and the Vedic rituals?"

"No! No!" he replied. "You forget that Buddhism was entirely within Hinduism! Even caste was not attacked—it was not yet crystallised, of course!—and Buddha merely tried to restore the ideal. *He who attains to god in this life*, says Manu, *is the Brahmin*. Buddha would have had it so, if he could."

"But how are Vedic and christian ritual connected?" persisted his opponent. "How *could* they be the same? You have nothing even corresponding to the central rite of our worship!"

"Why yes!" said the Swâmi, "Vedic ritual has its Mass, the offering of food to god, your Blessed Sacrament, our *prasadam*. Only it is offered sitting, not kneeling, as is common in hot countries. They kneel in Thibet. Then, too, Vedic ritual has its lights, incense, music."

"But," was the somewhat ungracious argument, "has it any common prayer?" Objections urged in this way always elicited some bold paradox which contained a new and unthought-of generalisation.

He flashed down on the question. "No! and neither had christianity! That is pure protestantism and protestantism took it from the Mohammedans, perhaps through moorish influence!

"Mohammedanism is the only religion that has completely broken down the idea of the priest. The leader of prayer stands with his back to the people, and only the reading of the Koran may take place from the pulpit. Protestantism is an approach to this.

"Even the tonsure existed in India, in the shaven head. I have seen a picture of Justinian receiving the Law from two monks, in which the monks', heads are entirely shaven. The monk and nun both existed, in pre-Buddhistic Hinduism. Europe gets her orders from the Thebaïd."

"At that rate, then, you accept Catholic ritual as aryan!"

"Yes almost all christianity is aryan, I believe. I am inclined to think that christ never existed. I have doubted that, ever since I had my dream,—that dream off Crete!* Indian and Egyptian ideas met at Alexandria,

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*In travelling from Naples to Port Said, on his way back to India, in January 1897, the Swami had a dream of an old and bearded man, who appeared before him, saying "This is the island of Crete," and showing him a place in the island, that he might afterwards identify. The vision went on to say that the religion of christanity had originated in the island of crete and in connection with this gave him two European words,—one of which was *Therapewtac*—which it declared, were derived from Sanskrit. *Therapewtac* meant sons (from the sansk, *putra*) of the Theras, or Buddhist monks. From this the Swami was to understand that christianity had originated in a Buddhist mission. The old man added "The proofs are all here," pointing to the ground. "Dig and you will see!"

As he awoke, feeling that this was no common dream, the Swami rose, and tumbled out on deck. Here he met an officer, turning in from his watch. "What O'clock is it?" said the Swami—"Midnight!" Was the answer. "Where are we?" he then said, when, to his astonishment, the answer came back. "fifty miles off Crete!"

Our Master used to laugh at himself for the strength of the impression that this dream had made on him. But he could never shake it off. The fact that the second of the two etymologies has been lost, is deeply to be regretted. The Swami had to say that before he had had this dream, it had never occurred to him to doubt that the personality of christ was strictly historic. We must remember, however, that according to Hindu philosophy, it is the completeness of an idea that is important. and not the question of its historical authenticity. The Swami once asked Sri Ramakrishna, when he was a boy, about this very matter. "Don't you think?" Answered his Guru, that those who could invent such things were themselves that."

and went forth to the world, tinctured with Judaism and Hellenism, as christianity.

" The Acts and Epistles, you know, are older than the Gospels, and S. John is spurious. The only figure we can be sure of is S. Paul, and he was not an eyewitness, and according to his own showing was capable of Jesuitry— ' by all means save soul ' isn't it ?

" No ! Buddha and Mahommed, alone amongst religious teachers, stand out with historic distinctness,—having been fortunate enough to have, while they were living, enemies as well as friends—Krishna I doubt. A yogi, and a shepherd, and a great king, have all been amalgamated in one beautiful figure, holding the Gîtâ in his hand

Renan's life of Jesus is mere froth. It does not touch Strauss, the real antiquarian. Two things stand out as personal living touches in the life of Christ,—the woman taken in adultery,—the most beautiful story in literature,—and the woman at the well. How strangely true is this last, to Indian life ! A woman, coming to draw-water, finds, seated at the well-side, a yellow-clad monk. He asks her for water. Then He teaches her, and does a little mind-reading and so on. Only in an Indian story, when she went to call the villagers, to look and listen, the monk would have taken his chance, and fled to the forest !

" On the whole, I think old Rabbi Hillel is responsible for the teachings of Jesus, and an obscure Jewish sect of Nazarenes—a sect of great antiquity—suddenly galvanised by S. Paul, furnished the mythic personality, as a centre of worship.

" The Resurrection, of course, is simply spring-cremation ? Only the rich Greeks and Romans had had cremation any way, and the new sun-myth would only stop it amongst the few.

"But Buddha! Buddha! surely he was the greatest man who ever lived. He never drew a breath for himself. Above all, he never claimed worship. He said, 'Buddha is not a man, but a state. I have found the door. Enter, all of you!'

He went to the feast of Ambapâli, 'the sinner.' He dined with the pariah, though he knew it would kill him, and sent a message to his host on his death-bed, thanking him for the great deliverance. Full of love and pity for a little goat, even before he had attained the truth! You remember how he offered his own head, that of prince and monk, if only the king would spare the kid that he was about to sacrifice and how the king was struck by his compassion, that he saved its life? Such a mixture of rationalism and feeling was never seen! Surely, surely, there was none like him!"

(*To be continued.*)

DUTY AND THE GITA.

The burden of Krishna's teaching is that the zealous performance of his duty is a man's most important task, to whatever caste he may belong ; and, as stated by Dr. Macdonnel, "The beauty and the power of the language in which this doctrine is inculcated is unsurpassed in any other work of Indian literature." We must here realise fully the difficulty of Arjuna's dilemma and sympathise with him. Imagine for a moment the peculiar perplexity of a schoolmaster who has to punish his own son severely in the class for some real mischief, or of a judge or magistrate who has to sentence his own beloved son or brother to death for some established crime against the law of the land. Such was Arjuna's difficulty. Such difficulties must be very frequent in the life of every one who wishes to lead a responsible and useful life on earth. To the irresponsible wanderer in life's desert, however, there is no such difficulty. There are some who, in such a crisis, will instinctively discharge their duty straightly and boldly. There are others (perhaps the majority) whom no amount of coaxing or good counsel can tempt to do their duty when their own selfish interests and motives are in risk. But the intermediate class of people generally oscillate like a pendulum between two extremes, and a gentle hint or advice, a word by way of patronage or assurance, will set them right. Arjuna belonged to this class. and Krishna's teaching was required to make him understand his duty and discharge it in the only rightful way possible.

The idea of duty involves in itself the idea of activity, for, duty is nothing else than activity in the right direction. The first thing for us to understand is that activity in some form or other is unavoidable as long as life lasts.

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः ।
शरीरयात्रापि चते न प्रसिध्येदकर्मणः ॥

न हि देहभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्माण्यशेषतः ।

That is, no one, as a matter of fact, remains perfectly inactive even for a single moment. It is not a question of his will or choice. It is not in the power of man to completely give up all activity. If he chooses to be idle without utilising his time properly, then according to the well-known proverb, Satan will find him some mischief to do. This at least, he cannot avoid. In short, man is optionless. Nature, the very essence of things in general, the very fact of a world and life in it, forces a man irresistably to some sort of necessary activity. Merely to eat and live involves some exertion on our part.

It is therefore incumbent on us all to regularise our activity and bring it into a system; for, doing something at least is far better than doing nothing at all. It is building castles in the air to think that it is possible to fly from the world and from all activity into some remote forest, "far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife." Even solitude, pure and simple, cannot be secured by this means. How then can true renunciation? Let us remember the exquisite lines of Byron:

To sit on rocks, to muse over flood and fell,
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
And mortal foot hath never or rarely been;
To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
With the wild flock that never needs a fold;
Alone over steeps and foaming falls to lean;

This is not solitude ; it is but to hold
Converse with Nature's charms and view her stores unrolled.

But midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men,
To hear, to see, to feel and to possess,
And roam along, the world's tired denizen,
With none who bless us, none whom we can bless,
Minions of splendour shrinking from distress.,
None that, with kindred consciousness endued,
If we were not, would seem to smile the less,
Of all that flattered, followed, sought and sued,
This is to be alone ; this, this is solitude !

This applies word for word only to solitude, but nevertheless it affords us an excellent parallel. Mere dwelling in the dreary forest or on the bleak mountain-top, far away from the haunts of men, does not constitutes solitude, but it is the absence of sympathy and harmony even amidst the crowd of men that makes real solitude. In the same way, real freedom from the darker side of wolrdly activity and from the cares, sorrows and evils incidental thereto, cannot be secured by despising the world and humanity, and by running to a safe distance from them.

The same is the case with religious advancement. One must remain in the world amidst the hum and buzz of life and yet be out of it by virtue of his courage and culture. He must be helping those that are less advanced than himself in religious evolution, and must himself try to be so far advanced as to remain unaffected by all those things, great or small, which easily upset the equilibrium of ordinary minds. A classical illustration on the point is that of a dew drop on the lotus leaf. The drop of water is in the very centre of the leaf, and yet looks like a

perfect pearl, its globular beauty remaining completely unaffected by cohesion or attachment to the leaf. Such should be the life of religious progress. The ways of the misanthrope are, after all, very selfish. He is the very incarnation of that selfishness which he has tried to avoid. He might very well have spared himself the labour of his journey to the forest, for, he might equally enjoy his selfishness even amidst active humanity To such a person whose only care is about himself and none else, no preaching of the principles of duty is necessary. Let us leave him alone. The idea of duty assumes that we are to serve others as much as others should serve us, and, therefore, for one who imagines that the whole world exists to promote his own selfish interests, the question of duty does not arise at all. Sri Krishna says :

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।
न च सन्न्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥

The meaning is ; it is not by remaining idle and doing nothing that a man can secure freedom from the results of action ; nor can he, by merely giving up all activity, dream of success in his religious life. There is one other strong reason why the religious should be as active in wordly life as the irreligious or the less religious. The cultured saint may not derive any benefit from such ordinary innocent activity, but a certain duty rests on his head.

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।
नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ।
यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥

उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम् ।
सङ्करस्यचकर्तास्या मुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥
न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम् ।
जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तः समाचरन् ॥

That is, whatever the leaders of the community do, others will do the same. Whatever opinions the elect may hold, whatever authority they may obey, others will quietly endorse. It is therefore incumbent on the religious elder to set a good example for others to follow. He should not create confusion, as regards the path of duty, in the minds of the ignorant. He must be as active as others, so that others may follow his example and not remain idle by imitation and ruin themselves. A notable example of such conduct was Sri Krishna himself. He was an incarnation of the Supreme. There was nothing in the world for him to acquire or to avoid. He had therefore nothing to do. But he went through his life as actively as any other. He was a king, a lover, a friend, a statesman, an arbitrator, a teacher, a warrior, and so on. Why ? Because, if he did nothing, people would have said : "The God that came down to earth to set us an example is idle and does nothing. We should therefore follow his example and be idle". Such a state of things would produce utter ruin, for, if nobody does anything, the world must necessarily come to an end.

We thus see that the advanced should be as active as the less advanced. What then is the difference between their activities, and how does religion create a distinction ?

सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।
कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथाऽसक्तः चिकीर्षुर्लोकसङ्ग्रहम् ॥

The activity of the ignorant springs from selfish motives and desires, whereas the wise man works unselfishly for the good of the world. Let us consider one or two examples. A man is enormously rich, so much so that he does not know what to do with his wealth. He is not overanxious to help anybody else and does not care whether the rest of the world is happy or miserable. He willingly gives away a few thousands to some public charity, not because he wants to do good to anyone, but because he loses very little by making the gift, and further he will become famous as a philanthophic millionaire, and this will add to his selfish pleasure and enjoyment. By way of contrast to this individual, there is a half-starved beggar who has barely the wherewithal to keep his body and soul together for a single day. He sees another beggar more starved and miserable and wretched than himself. And actuated by a genuine feeling of sympathy and by a burning desire to save the other, he willingly gives him something out of the little he has, and cheerfully foregoes a portion of his own pressing necessity. This is not a mere theoretical speculation, for, there are historical instances of such charity. The famous Sanskrit poet, Māgha, was the benefactor of several beggars even while he was on the verge of starvation. And what sublimer example of charity can one have than the well-known instance of Sir Philip Sydney, on his death-bed in the battlefield, handing over to an ordinary soldier who was also dying hard by, the cup of water that could alone save his own life, for the mere reason that the necessity of the solider was more pressing than his own! What a commendable self-sacrifice! Some may say that it is charity overdone, a case of extremes. That is a separate question altogether about which opinions differ. For our present purpose it is enough to note

carefully the difference between the mock-charity on the one hand and the real charity on the other. In both cases, no doubt, the benefit done to the second party is the same, and therein the activities of the two kinds of individuals are similar. But no one would think of calling the conduct of the first by the name of charity. Again, take the case of one who shuts his eyes, pretends meditation, sits at worship and strikes his bell vehemently, only when he is observed, with the sole object of being considered a very religious and orthodox man by others. Contrast him with another person who is always religious whether he is observed or not. He does not care whether he is dubbed religious or irreligious, orthodox or heterodox, by others. His object is to be really religious, both for his own good and for the good of others. He has no motive in *pretending* to be religious. This idea is very beautifully expressed in the Gita itself :—

> कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।
> इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते ॥
>
> यस्त्विन्द्रियाणिमनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन ।
> कर्मेन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः सविशिष्यते ॥

If a man merely shuts his eyes and mouth, and closes his ears and nostrils, and sits still like a mummy with his mind full of worldly desires and idle dreams, such a man is not simply a fool, but a pretender and a frand. A thousandfold superior is he who goes to the very root of the matter, who does not deaden his external senses but controls their action by the instrumentality of his mind, and, with his senses wide open, marches through life in the company of his fellowmen, with this distinction, namely, that he is proof to all temptations, and triumphs over them. Does it not often happen that, even while we are

reading a book aloud, our attention wanders away, and though the eye is seeing the lines and the voice is pronouncing them, the mind is as clean and as innocent of the contents of the book as it was at the commencement.

As already stated Sri Krishna himself did the duty that fell to his lot by birth. We may here cite, as additional instances, Bhishma, Drona and Kripa. These were learned men, elders, well-versed in the Sastras, and ever bent on doing what was right. Why did they fight on the side of unrighteousness against the virtuous Pandavas, who were more beloved to them as pupils than their enemies, the Kauravas? It was because they had to do their duty. They were hereditarily attached to the Kaurava dynasty and were ever under their protection. Would they be justified in forsaking them at the critical moment of decisive battle? What credit would we be prepared to give to the Russian army if it forsook in a band the cause of its country simply because to its mind it appeared that justice was on the side of the Japanese? Under such a of things no social organisation or political community state can exist at all.

We are further taught: "Your province is work, and not the success or the failure of it." And then, "He who does work without any expectation of selfish benefit is the real saint and ascetic; not he who gives up all religious ceremonial and does no work." This principle of duty for its own sake, of work without expectation of reward, is the thread that runs through the whole of the Gita and is the sum and substance of its philosophy.

The discharge of one's own duty without discontent means that a man should be content with doing the best that he can do, under the circumstances in which he stands. One should never forget his own position. It may well be that he sees another occupying a better posi-

tion than himself and doing better things than what he is called on to do. But that should not tempt his ambition. For himself, he must, first of all, be true to his own situation. Of course, if he can alter that situation for a better one, he may try. But for the time being he must do his duty, looking to his present position.

NOTES AND THOUGHTS

The single thought, 'God is for my soul, and my soul is for Him,' suffices to fill a universe of feeling and gives rise to a hundred metaphors. Spiritual persons have exhausted human relationships in the vain attempt to express their full sense of what God (or Christ) is to them. Father, Brother, Friend, King, master, shepherd, guide, are common titles. In other figures, God is their Tower, their glory, their Rock, their shield, their sun, their star, their joy, their Portion, their Hope, their Trust, their Life. But what, has been said will show why a still tenderer tie has ordinarily presented itself to the Christian imagination as a very appropriate metaphor, that of marriage. The habit of breathing to God our most secret hopes, sorrows, complaints and wishes, in unheard whisper, with the consciousness that He is always inseparable from our being, perhaps pressed this comparison forward."

F. W. Newman.

पिता त्वं माता त्वं दयिततनयस्त्वं प्रियसुहृ-
त्त्वमेव त्वं मित्रं गुरुरसि गतिश्चासि जगताम् ।
त्वदीयस्त्वद्भृत्यस्तवपरिजनस्त्वद्गतिरहं
प्रपन्नश्चैवं सत्यहमपि तवैवास्मि हि भरः ॥

—Sri Yâmunâchârya.

पिता च रक्षकश्शेषी भर्ता ज्ञेयो रमापतिः ।
स्वाम्याधारो ममाऽऽत्मा च भोक्ता चेति मनूदितः ॥

—Sri Pillai Lókâchârya.